UNITED
NATIONS

A S

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/930
S/1998/460
3 June 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda item 61
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 3 June 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to previous letters, the latest being dated 2 May 1998, I have the honour to bring to your attention the following developments regarding the ongoing destruction of the religious and cultural identity of the occupied part of Cyprus.

Although the policy of the Government of Cyprus is to protect and maintain all cultural, historical and religious monuments in Cyprus, this policy is unfortunately not adhered to in the illegally occupied areas controlled by Turkish troops, where my Government has no control.

The latest violations are:

1. The Church of Panagia Evangelistria in the occupied village of Gerolakkos, which has been converted into a mosque;

2. The Church of Agios Mamas, also located in the occupied village of Gerolakkos, which has been converted into a cultural centre;

3. The Church of Profitis Zacharias in the occupied village of Pano Dikomon, which has been converted into a mosque.

As stated in previous letters, the repeated illegal conversions are in violation of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Cooperation adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO. It should be reiterated that these acts of destruction are being promoted by Turkey in keeping with its policies and long-term expansionist plans against Cyprus. Moreover it is a further example of Turkey's complete disrespect for other

people's cultural heritage and the religious intolerance practised by that country. Turkey disregards all relevant international agreements, violates fundamental principles of civilization and desecrates what is sacred and holy to the people of Cyprus.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I wish once again to protest strongly against these wilful and calculated acts of destruction by Turkey which are taking place systematically as part of a deliberate plan to obliterate the island's religious, archaeological and historical heritage.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) S. ZACKHEOS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative